

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1077

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the continued importance of the United States-Lebanon relationship.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 31, 2020

Mr. LAHOOD (for himself, Ms. SHALALA, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the continued importance of the United States-Lebanon relationship.

Whereas the security, sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Lebanon, a pluralistic democracy in the Middle East, is in the interest of the United States and its allies in the region;

Whereas, for more than a decade, the United States has provided robust assistance to Lebanon, including training and equipment for the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), development assistance through the Economic Support Fund (ESF), funding for schools and hospitals in Lebanon through the American Schools and Hospitals

Abroad (ASHA) Program, and funding for the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI);

Whereas the integrity and independence of the LAF serves a United States national security interest;

Whereas the LAF has been a critical stabilizing force in Lebanon with a longstanding partnership with the United States military;

Whereas the United States has provided over \$1,000,000,000 in foreign military and security assistance to the LAF;

Whereas the LAF, as the primary institution entrusted with Lebanon's defense, security, and sovereignty, is an important force to support the safety and security of Lebanon;

Whereas international support for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remains necessary to counteract destabilizing forces in Lebanon and help lower tensions at the Lebanon-Israel border;

Whereas UNIFIL has been effective in facilitating tripartite dialogues between the Lebanese and Israeli military officials and in conducting numerous border patrols in partnership with the LAF, to deescalate the possibilities of "unintended consequences leading to violent conflict";

Whereas United States support for American institutions in Lebanon through programs such as ASHA, MEPI, and ESF assistance are vital for fostering democratic ideals and principles throughout Lebanon;

Whereas Lebanon hosts an estimated 1,500,000 refugees, a population equal to almost one-third of its native population and the highest refugee-per-capita ratio in the world, despite challenges within its own social and economic sectors;

Whereas Hezbollah alongside corrupt elites have taken advantage of the Lebanese economy, government, and its citizens;

Whereas Iran seeks to eliminate Lebanon's sovereignty and its history as a strong United States ally and democratic actor in the Middle East;

Whereas Hezbollah continues to harm the Lebanese people by violating United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006), perpetuating undue foreign influence from Iran, harming the distinct demographic and social equilibrium of Lebanon, stoking sectarian violence, weakening the Lebanese economy, and supporting corruption and violence within Lebanon;

Whereas corruption in the Lebanese public sector remains unchecked, despite calls for efforts to combat corruption in all government and social society sectors;

Whereas the harmful politicization of the independent judiciary in Lebanon is untenable and is being met with strong disagreement by the Lebanese people and international actors; and

Whereas respect for the rule of law and democratic principles of an independent and free press, long supported in Lebanon, must persist at the highest levels: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) notes that the United States provides assist-
 3 ance to the people of Lebanon in order to support
 4 services and security for Lebanese citizens, particu-
 5 larly to counter the growing influence and negative
 6 impact of Hezbollah and other destabilizing actors;

1 (2) encourages the Government of Lebanon to
2 work actively to combat corruption in government,
3 execute structural reforms and anticorruption meas-
4 ures, and work with international financial institu-
5 tions like the International Monetary Fund and
6 World Bank to undertake necessary reforms in order
7 to stabilize the economy;

8 (3) calls on the Lebanese Government to secure
9 the safety, freedom of movement, and access for
10 United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon troops
11 and mitigate any destabilizing effects on Lebanon
12 and while supporting robust enforcement of United
13 Nations Security Council Resolution 1701;

14 (4) supports the right of the people of Lebanon
15 to engage in peaceful demonstration and assembly to
16 achieve accountability in government, democratic po-
17 litical representation, increased civil rights, and
18 anticorruption reforms;

19 (5) recognizes the Lebanese Armed Forces
20 (LAF) as the sole institution entrusted with the de-
21 fense of the sovereignty of Lebanon and supports
22 strengthening United States partnerships with the
23 LAF to prevent terrorist groups such as Hezbollah,
24 ISIS, and Al Qaeda from gaining influence in Leb-
25 anon; and

1 (6) recognizes the role of Lebanon and its insti-
2 tutions, such as an independent judiciary, free press,
3 and multidenominational, representative government
4 as historic examples of democratic values in the Mid-
5 dle East and expresses support for the continuation
6 of democracy and democratic ideals in Lebanon.

○